

**IN THE CLAIMS**

1. (Original) A test strip, having an indentation along an edge for tactile identification of a sample application port, said test strip comprising:

a first insulating substrate having first and second surfaces, an indentation along an edge and a vent hole;

at least two electrically conductive tracks affixed to the first surface of the first insulating substrate;

a second insulating substrate having first and second surfaces, an indentation along an edge, and first and second openings, the second surface being affixed to the conductive tracks and the first surface of the first insulating substrate, the first opening exposing a portion of the conductive tracks for electrical connection to a meter capable of measuring an electrical property, the second opening being located along said edge and exposing a different portion of the conductive tracks and the vent hole;

a test reagent overlaying at least a portion of the conductive tracks exposed by the second opening; and

a roof having first and second surfaces and an indentation along an edge, the second surface of the roof being affixed to the first surface of the second insulating substrate and positioned so that the second surface of the roof and the surface of the first insulating substrate form opposing walls of a capillary fill chamber with a sample application port at said edge of the second insulating substrate, wherein the second opening in the second insulating substrate and the indentations in the first insulating substrate, the second insulating substrate, and the roof are aligned to thereby provide for tactile identification of the sample application port.

2. (Original) The test strip of claim 1, wherein the second surface of the roof includes a hydrophilic coating.

3. (Original) The test strip of claim 1, wherein the test reagent includes

reaction components appropriate for performing a test and from about 1.75% by weight to about 17.5% by weight polyethylene oxide having a mean molecular weight from about 100 kilodaltons to about 900 kilodaltons,

wherein the reagent will redissolve or resuspend upon addition of an aqueous test sample to the reagent.

4. (Original) The test strip of claim 1, wherein the test reagent includes reaction components appropriate for performing a test, and a dissolvable or suspendable film forming mixture including from about 0.2% by weight to about 2% by weight polyethylene oxide having a mean molecular weight from about 100 kilodaltons to about 900 kilodaltons,

wherein the test reagent may be applied to the test strip in a wet form, may be subsequently dried, and then redissolved or resuspended upon addition of an aqueous test sample to the dried reagent.

5. (Original) The test strip of claim 4, wherein the second surface of the roof includes a hydrophilic coating.

6. (Original) The test strip of claim 1, wherein the roof has a solid transparent or translucent window, which is dimensioned and positioned so that the window overlays the entire width of the electrically conductive track that is closest to the indentation of the first insulating substrate and at least about ten percent of the width of the other electrically conductive track.

7. (Original) The test strip of claim 6, wherein the second surface of the roof includes a hydrophilic coating.

8. (Original) The test strip of claim 6, wherein the test reagent includes

reaction components appropriate for performing a test and from about 1.75% by weight to about 17.5% by weight polyethylene oxide having a mean molecular weight from about 100 kilodaltons to about 900 kilodaltons,

wherein the reagent will redissolve or resuspend upon addition of an aqueous test sample to the reagent.

9. (Original) The test strip of claim 6, wherein the test reagent includes reaction components appropriate for performing a test, and a dissolvable or suspendable film forming mixture including from about 0.2% by weight to about 2% by weight polyethylene oxide having a mean molecular weight from about 100 kilodaltons to about 900 kilodaltons,

wherein the test reagent may be applied to the test strip in a wet form, may be subsequently dried, and then redissolved or resuspended upon addition of an aqueous test sample to the dried reagent.

10. (Original) The test strip of claim 9, wherein the second surface of the roof includes a hydrophilic coating.

11. (Original) The test strip of claim 1, further comprising:

a first notch along the indentation in the first insulating substrate, and a notch along the indentation in the roof, both first and second notches being positioned so that they overlay one another.

12. (Original) The test strip of claim 11, wherein the second surface of the roof includes a hydrophilic coating.

13. (Original) The test strip of claim 11, wherein the test reagent includes

reaction components appropriate for performing a test and from about 1.75% by weight to about 17.5% by weight polyethylene oxide having a mean molecular weight from about 100 kilodaltons to about 900 kilodaltons,

wherein the reagent will redissolve or resuspend upon addition of an aqueous test sample to the reagent.

14. (Original) The test strip of claim 11, wherein the test reagent includes reaction components appropriate for performing a test, and a dissolvable or suspendable film forming mixture including from about 0.2% by weight to about 2% by weight polyethylene oxide having a mean molecular weight from about 100 kilodaltons to about 900 kilodaltons,

wherein the test reagent may be applied to the test strip in a wet form, may be subsequently dried, and then redissolved or resuspended upon addition of an aqueous test sample to the dried reagent.

15. (Original) The test strip of claim 14, wherein the second surface of the roof includes a hydrophilic coating.

16. (Original) The test strip of claim 11 wherein the roof has a solid transparent or translucent window, which is dimensioned and positioned so that the window overlays the entire width of the electrically conductive track that is closest to the indentation of the first insulating substrate and at least about ten percent of the width of the other electrically conductive track.

17. (Original) The test strip of claim 16, wherein the second surface of the roof includes a hydrophilic coating.

18. (Original) The test strip of claim 16, wherein the test reagent includes reaction components appropriate for performing a test, and a dissolvable or suspendable film forming mixture including from about 0.2% by weight to about 2% by weight

polyethylene oxide having a mean molecular weight from about 100 kilodaltons to about 900 kilodaltons,

wherein the test reagent may be applied to the test strip in a wet form, may be subsequently dried, and then redissolved or resuspended upon addition of an aqueous test sample to the dried reagent.

19. (Original) The test strip of claim 18, wherein the second surface of the roof includes a hydrophilic coating.

20. (Original) The test strip of claim 16, wherein the test reagent includes reaction components appropriate for the test, and a dissolvable or suspendable film forming mixture including from about 0.2% weight to about 2% by weight polyethylene oxide having a mean molecular weight of 300 kilodaltons.

21. (Original) The test strip of claim 20, wherein the polyethylene oxide is about 0.71% by weight.

22. (Original) The test strip of claim 16, wherein the test reagent includes reaction components appropriate for performing a test and from about 1.75% by weight to about 17.5% by weight polyethylene oxide having a mean molecular weight from about 100 kilodaltons to about 900 kilodaltons,

wherein the reagent will redissolve or resuspend upon addition of an aqueous test sample to the reagent.

23. (Original) The test strip of claim 22, wherein the mean molecular weight of the polyethylene oxide is 300 kilodaltons.

24. (Original) The test strip of claim 23, wherein the amount of polyethylene oxide, in the reagent is about 6.2% by weight.

25. (Original) A test strip comprising:

a first insulating substrate having first and second surfaces, a notch along an edge, and a vent hole;

at least two electrically conductive tracks affixed to the first surface of the first insulating substrate;

a second insulating substrate having first and second surfaces and first and second openings, the second surface being affixed to the conductive tracks and the first surface of the first insulating substrate, the first opening exposing a portion of the conductive tracks for electrical connection to a meter capable of measuring an electrical property, the second opening being located along an edge of the second insulating substrate and exposing a different portion of the conductive tracks, the notch in the first insulating substrate, and the vent hole;

a test reagent overlaying at least a portion of the conductive tracks exposed by the second opening; and

a roof having first and second surfaces and a notch along an edge, the second surface of the roof being affixed to the first surface of the second insulating substrate and positioned so that 1) the second surface of the roof and the first surface of the first insulating substrate form opposing walls of a capillary fill chamber with a sample application port at said edge of the second insulating substrate, and 2) the notch in the roof overlays the notch in the first insulating substrate;

whereby the notch in the roof and the notch in the first insulating substrate will cause a liquid aqueous sample, when touched to the sample application port, to flow into the capillary chamber without significant hesitation.

26. (Original) A test strip, comprising:

a first insulating substrate having first and second surfaces and a vent hole;

at least two electrically conductive tracks affixed to the first surface of the first insulating substrate;

a second insulating substrate having first and second surfaces and first and second openings, the second surface being affixed to the conductive tracks and the first surface of the first insulating substrate, the first opening exposing a portion of the conductive tracks for electrical connection to a meter capable of measuring an electrical property, the second opening being located along an edge of the second insulating substrate and exposing a different portion of the conductive tracks and the vent hole;

a test reagent overlaying at least a portion of the conductive tracks exposed by the second opening; and

a roof having first and second surfaces and a solid transparent or translucent window, the second surface of the roof being affixed to the first surface of the second insulating substrate and positioned so that it overlays the second opening of the second insulating substrate and so that the second surface of the roof and the first surface of the first insulating substrate form opposing walls of a capillary fill chamber with a sample application port at said edge of the second insulating substrate, and the transparent or translucent window being dimensioned and positioned so that the window extends from the sample application port, and overlays the entire width of one of the electrically conductive tracks and at least about ten percent of the width of the other electrically conductive track.

27. (Original) A test strip, having an indentation along an edge for tactile identification of a sample application port, said test strip comprising:

a first insulating substrate having first and second surfaces and an indentation along an edge;

at least two electrically conductive tracks affixed to the first surface of the first insulating substrate;

a second insulating substrate having first and second surfaces, an indentation along an edge and an opening, the second surface being affixed to the conductive tracks and the first surface of the first insulating substrate, the second insulating substrate configured to expose a portion of the conductive tracks for electrical connection to a meter capable of measuring an electrical property, the opening being located along said edge and exposing a different portion of the conductive tracks;

a test reagent overlaying at least a portion of the conductive tracks exposed by the opening;

a roof having first and second surfaces and an indentation along an edge, the second surface of the roof being affixed to the first surface of the second insulating substrate and positioned so as to overlay the opening and so that the second surface of the roof and the first surface of the first insulating substrate form opposing walls of a capillary fill chamber with a sample application port at said edge of the second insulating substrate; and

a vent hole communicating with the capillary fill chamber;

wherein the opening in the second insulating substrate and the indentations in the first insulating substrate, the second insulating substrate, and the roof are aligned to thereby provide for tactile identification of the sample application port.

28. (Original) The test strip of claim 27, wherein the roof has a solid transparent or translucent window, which is dimensioned and positioned so that the window overlays the entire width of the electrically conductive track that is closest to the indentation of the first insulating substrate and at least about ten percent of the width of the other electrically conductive track.

29. (Original) The test strip of claim 27 further comprising a first notch along the indentation of the first insulating substrate, and a notch along the indentation in the roof, both first and second notches being positioned so that they overlay one another.

30. (Original) The test strip of claim 29 wherein the roof has a solid transparent or translucent window, which is dimensioned and positioned so that the window overlays the entire width of the electrically conductive track that is closest to the indentation of the first insulating substrate and at least about ten percent of the width of the other electrically conductive track.

31. (Original) A test strip comprising:

a first insulating substrate having first and second surfaces and a notch along an edge;

at least two electrically conductive tracks affixed to the first surface of the first insulating substrate;

a second insulating substrate having first and second surfaces and an opening, the second surface being affixed to the conductive tracks and the first surface of the first insulating substrate, the second insulating substrate configured to expose a portion of the conductive tracks for electrical connection to a meter capable of measuring an electrical property, the opening being located along an edge of the second insulating substrate and exposing a different portion of the conductive tracks, and overlaying the notch in the first insulating substrate;

a test reagent overlaying at least a portion of the conductive tracks exposed by the opening;

a roof having first and second surfaces and a notch along an edge, the second surface of the roof being affixed to the first surface of the second insulating substrate and positioned so that 1) the second surface of the roof and the first surface of the first insulating substrate form opposing walls of a capillary fill chamber with a sample application port at

said edge of the second insulating substrate, and 2) the notch in the roof overlays the notch in the first insulating substrate; and

a vent hole communicating with the capillary fill chamber;

whereby the notch in the roof and the notch in the first insulating substrate will cause a liquid aqueous sample, when touched to the sample application port, to flow into the capillary chamber without significant hesitation.

32. (Original) A test strip comprising:

a first insulating substrate having first and second surfaces;

at least two electrically conductive tracks affixed to the first surface of the first insulating substrate;

a second insulating substrate having first and second surfaces and an opening, the second surface being affixed to the conductive tracks and the first surface of the first insulating substrate, the second insulating substrate configured to expose a portion of the conductive tracks for electrical connection to a meter capable of measuring an electrical property, the opening being located along an edge of the second insulating substrate and exposing a different portion of the conductive tracks;

a test reagent overlaying at least a portion of the conductive tracks exposed by the opening;

a roof having first and second surfaces and a solid transparent or translucent window, the second surface of the roof being affixed to the first surface of the second insulating substrate and positioned so that it overlays the opening of the second insulating substrate and so that the second surface of the roof and the first surface of the first insulating substrate form opposing walls of a capillary fill chamber with a sample application port at said edge of the second insulating substrate, and the transparent or translucent window

being dimensioned and positioned so that the window extends from the sample application port, and overlays the entire width of one of the electrically conductive tracks and at least about ten percent of the width of the other electrically conductive track; and  
a vent hole communicating with the capillary fill chamber.

~~33-38.~~ (Cancelled)

39. (New) A test strip for conducting testing on a bodily fluid comprising:

a strip body defining a capillary test chamber including a test reagent, the capillary test chamber opening along an edge and having a sample application port at the edge, the capillary test chamber having a length extending from the edge and a width, said strip body including a first, transparent or translucent portion which overlies a first part of the capillary test chamber and permits the first part of the capillary test chamber to be visible through the first portion, said strip body further including a second, opaque portion overlying a second part of the capillary test chamber and adjoining the first portion, the first portion and the second portion together defining an opaque, fill line extending across the width of the capillary test chamber and positioned intermediate the length of the capillary test chamber such that the filling of liquid to the fill line indicates sufficient filling of the capillary test chamber for the test strip to be useful in testing the bodily fluid.

40. (New) The test strip of claim 39 in which the opaque portion is colored to provide a visible contrast with the bodily fluid to be tested.

41. (New) The test strip of claim 39 in which said strip body includes a hydrophilic surface defining at least a portion of the capillary test chamber.

42. (New) The test strip of claim 39 in which the first, transparent or translucent portion extends inwardly of the test strip from the sample application port.

43. (New) The test strip of claim 42 in which each of the first portion and the capillary test chamber has a length extending in the direction inwardly from the sample application port, the length of the first portion being shorter than the length of the capillary test chamber.

44. (New) The test strip of claim 39 in which the first portion is dimensioned and positioned such that greater than about 75% of the width of the capillary test chamber is visible through the first portion.

45. (New) The test strip of claim 39 in which said strip body further includes a third, opaque portion extending adjacent one side of the capillary test chamber and a fourth, opaque portion extending adjacent the other side of the capillary test chamber.

46. (New) The test strip of claim 39 in which said strip body further includes a vent hole communicating with the capillary test chamber.

47. (New) The test strip of claim 46 in which the fill line is positioned between the sample application port and the vent hole.

48. (New) The test strip of claim 39 and which further includes at least two conductive tracks affixed to said strip body and exposed to the capillary test chamber, the test reagent overlying at least a portion of the conductive tracks exposed to the capillary test chamber.

49. (New) The test strip of claim 48 in which the conductive tracks comprise a working electrode and a counter electrode, each electrode extending across the width of the capillary test chamber, the first, transparent or translucent portion being dimensioned and positioned to overlie the entire width of the working electrode and at least 10% of the width of the counter electrode.

50. (New) The test strip of claim 49 in which the first portion is dimensioned and positioned to overlie the entire width of both the working and counter electrodes.

51. (New) The test strip of claim 39 in which said strip body includes a substrate having an upper surface, and a spacer attached to the upper surface of the substrate and defining a channel opening at one edge of the substrate and extending interiorly from the edge, the spacer including an upper surface; said strip body further including a cover attached to the upper surface of the spacer and extending over the channel, the cover, spacer and substrate defining the capillary fill chamber opening along an edge of said strip body; the cover including the opaque fill line; said strip body further including a vent hole communicating with the capillary fill chamber.

52. (New) The test strip of claim 51 and which further includes at least two conductive tracks affixed to said strip body and exposed to the capillary test chamber, the test reagent overlying at least a portion of the conductive tracks exposed to the capillary test chamber.

53. (New) The test strip of claim 52 in which the conductive tracks comprise a working electrode and a counter electrode, each electrode extending across the width of the capillary test chamber, the first, transparent or translucent portion being dimensioned and positioned to overlie the entire width of the working electrode and at least 10% of the width of the counter electrode.

54. (New) The test strip of claim 53 in which the first portion is dimensioned and positioned to overlie the entire width of both the working and counter electrodes.

55. (New) The test strip of claim 51 in which the cover includes a hydrophilic surface defining at least a portion of the capillary test chamber.

56. (New) A test strip for conducting testing on a bodily fluid comprising:

a strip body defining a capillary test chamber including a test reagent, the capillary test chamber opening along an edge of said strip body and having a sample application port at the edge, the capillary test chamber having a length extending from the edge and a width, said strip body including a transparent or translucent portion which overlies a part of the capillary test chamber and permits the capillary test chamber to be visible through the

transparent or translucent portion, said strip body further including an opaque, fill line extending across the width of the capillary test chamber and positioned such that the filling of liquid to the fill line indicates sufficient filling of the capillary test chamber for the test strip to be useful in testing the bodily fluid.

57. (New) The test strip of claim 56 in which the first, transparent or translucent portion extends inwardly of the test strip from the sample application port.

58. (New) The test strip of claim 56 in which said strip body further includes a vent hole communicating with the capillary test chamber.

59. (New) The test strip of claim 58 in which the fill line is positioned between the sample application port and the vent hole.

60. (New) The test strip of claim 56 and which further includes at least two conductive tracks affixed to said strip body and exposed to the capillary test chamber, the test reagent overlying at least a portion of the conductive tracks exposed to the capillary test chamber.

61. (New) A test strip for conducting testing on a bodily fluid comprising:

a strip body defining a capillary test chamber including a test reagent, the capillary test chamber opening along an edge of said strip body and having a sample application port at the edge, said strip body including a first, transparent or translucent portion which overlies a first part of the capillary test chamber and permits the capillary test chamber to be visible through the first portion, said strip body further including a second, opaque portion which overlies a second part of the capillary test chamber, the first portion being sized and positioned such that complete filling of the first portion with liquid is an indication that sufficient liquid is present to accurately perform a test with said test strip.

62. (New) The test strip of claim 61 in which the first, transparent or translucent portion extends inwardly of the test strip from the sample application port.

63. (New) The test strip of claim 61 in which said strip body further includes a vent hole communicating with the capillary test chamber.

64. (New) The test strip of claim 63 in which the fill line is positioned between the sample application port and the vent hole.

65. (New) The test strip of claim 61 and which further includes at least two conductive tracks affixed to said strip body and exposed to the capillary test chamber, the test reagent overlying at least a portion of the conductive tracks exposed to the capillary test chamber.

66. (New) A method for conducting a test on a bodily fluid sample using a test strip comprising:

providing a test strip of claim 39;

contacting the bodily fluid sample to the sample application port of the test strip;

observing through the first portion of the strip body the filling of the capillary test chamber to the fill line; and

after said observing, conducting the test.

67. (New) A method for determining if a sufficient bodily fluid sample is present in a test strip to conduct a test on the fluid sample comprising:

providing a test strip of claim 39;

contacting the bodily fluid sample to the sample application port of the test strip;

observing through the first portion of the strip body the filling of the capillary test chamber to the fill line.